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Hall says he belonged to private army

NEW YORK (AP) — Sam Hall, arrested 10 days ago on espionage charges in Nicaragua, says he is the sole remaining member of a private "American foreign legion" formed in 1984 after talks with U.S. military officials.

He spoke in an interview broadcast yesterday on the "60 Minutes" CBS television program.

Mr. Hall, who is in a Sandinista prison in Managua, said he knew of no relationship between the group — which he said was called "Phoe-

nix Battalion" — and the CIA or the National Security Council.

Congress is investigating whether officials of those agencies violated any laws in aiding anti-Sandinista contra rebels.

At one time the battalion had 540 members, he said, but it was later disbanded. Now, he said, he was the lone member.

"It was started by being invited to the Pentagon on the 28th of November" in 1984, he said.

Asked by whom he was invited,

he responded, "I can't say that. That name I will give behind locked doors at a congressional hearing."

Maj. Greg McGuckin, a Pentagon spokesman, declined to comment on the alleged 1984 meeting, saying, "Hall and his claims have nothing to do with us. It's really a State Department matter, anything Hall might have to say."

Sandra McCarty, State Department duty officer, said, "I don't know anything about any meeting like that."

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